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Security Council

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Letter dated 8 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of South Africa for the month of March 2007 (see annex). This assessment has been prepared under my own responsibility. I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Baso **Sangqu**
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Annex to the letter dated 8 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of South Africa (March 2007)

During the South African presidency the Security Council held 18 meetings, including an open debate on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security, and 20 informal consultations. Five resolutions and four presidential statements were adopted.

Africa

The Sudan

On 6 March, the Security Council was briefed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur, Jan Eliasson, on his mission of re-energizing and facilitating the political process on the basis of the Darfur Peace Agreement.

The Council was also briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, on the implementation of the three-phased approach in Darfur.

On 19 March, the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, on the response of the Government of the Sudan to the Secretary-General's letter of 24 January 2007 presenting the details of phase II (heavy support package) of the three-phased approach. The Under-Secretary-General highlighted what the Secretariat saw as the principal issues raised in President Al-Bashir's letter, revisited steps taken to develop the United Nations package and briefly described the fundamental implications of taking forward suggestions in the President's letter and its annex.

Somalia

On 13 March, the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, François Lonseny Fall, on the political situation in Somalia as well as on the developments concerning the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

During the discussions, the Council members stressed the need for a broad-based, all inclusive political process to consolidate stability, peace and reconciliation in Somalia. Members also voiced serious concern over the escalating violence in Somalia and appealed to the international community to assist the African Union with financial and logistical support.

On 23 March, the President of the Council read a statement to the press in which the members expressed concern about the humanitarian situation in Somalia, which continued to deteriorate, greatly increasing the suffering of Somalis.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 14 March, the Council was briefed by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Abou Moussa, and the High Representative for the elections, Gérard Stoudmann, on the political developments in Côte d'Ivoire, in particular the Ouagadougou Agreement concluded by President Laurent Gbagbo and Mr. Guillaume Soro on 4 March 2007.

Following the consultations, a statement to the press was read out by the President, in which the Council welcomed the Agreement, encouraged implementation, and requested the Secretary-General to continue engaging the parties and the Facilitator.

On 28 March, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/8) welcoming and endorsing the Ouagadougou Agreement and requesting the Secretary-General to submit to it recommendations by 15 May 2007 on the role that the United Nations should play to support the implementation of the peace process.

Liberia

On 22 March, the Council discussed the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The consultations were preceded by a meeting of the Security Council with the troop-contributing countries, during which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Alan Doss, gave a briefing concerning the military and police dimensions of UNMIL. On 30 March, the Security Council adopted resolution 1750 (2007), extending the mandate of UNMIL for a further six months.

Guinea-Bissau

On 29 March, the representative of the Secretary-General in Guinea-Bissau, Shola Omoregie, briefed the Council on the developments in Guinea-Bissau. Following the briefing, the President read out a statement to the press expressing concern about the continuing political and social tensions between the National Assembly and the Government, which had led to the resignation of the Prime Minister on 28 March 2007. The Council further urged the parties to resolve their differences through dialogue and strict respect for the constitutional framework.

Chad

The Council held an informal private meeting with the Foreign Minister of Chad to discuss ways of improving security conditions on the Chad side of the border with the Sudan and of fostering regional peace and stability through the monitoring of cross-border activities between Chad, the Central African Republic and the Sudan, including possible deployment of a United Nations mission. This was pursuant to the report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/1019), in which it was recommended that there be a United Nations presence in the border areas of Chad, the Central African Republic and the Sudan.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 22 March, the Council, in a statement read to the press by the President, expressed serious concern about the violent clashes that had erupted in Kinshasa and encouraged the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of

the Congo to address the security challenge with a view to safeguarding the ongoing political process.

Cross-border issues in West Africa

On 16 March, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, briefed the Council. He informed the Council that, compared to the situation a few years previously, prospects for durable peace appeared far more promising in West Africa, although the proliferation of small arms and light weapons continued to be of great concern.

The situation in the Great Lakes region

On 9 March, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ibrahima Fall, on the situation in the Great Lakes region. The Special Representative's mandate came to an end on 31 March. Implementation of the outcomes of the International Conference, in particular the Pact on Security, Stability and Development of December 2006, was being coordinated by the newly established Executive Secretariat of the Great Lakes Conference in Bujumbura. The Special Representative's briefing focused on the main achievements of the International Conference and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, lessons learned, the challenges ahead and the future role of the United Nations and its agencies in the region, including the need for assistance to implement the outcomes of the International Conference.

On 22 March, the Council heard a briefing by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas, Joaquim Chissano, on the latest developments in the peace talks between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army. At the end of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/6).

Asia

Middle East

Lebanon

The Council convened on 21 March to receive a briefing from the Commissioner, Serge Brammertz, on the seventh periodic report of the International Independent Investigation Commission (S/2007/150).

The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1748 (2007) on 27 March, by which it decided to extend the mandate of the Commission until 15 June 2008 or to terminate it earlier if the Commission reported that it had completed the implementation of its mandate. The Council also requested the Commission henceforth to report to the Council on the progress every four months (previously the reporting obligation was every three months).

Palestine/Israel

The Council convened on 14 March to receive its monthly briefing on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B. Lynn Pascoe. The

briefing covered developments in the region over the previous month. The Council did not adopt any statement after the meeting.

Iraq

United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission

The Council convened on 7 March to receive a briefing from the Acting Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), Demetrius Perricos, on the twenty-eighth quarterly report of the Commission (S/2007/106). He explained the activities of UNMOVIC during the period from 1 December 2006 to 28 February 2007.

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq/multinational force

The Council convened on 15 March, in the presence of the Vice-President of Iraq, Adil Abd al-Mahdi, to receive its quarterly briefing on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the multinational force. By resolution 1723 (2006) the Council required the Secretary-General to report to it on a quarterly basis on the situation in Iraq and specifically the activities of UNAMI. The Council further requested the United States, on behalf of the multinational force, to report to the Council on a quarterly basis on the activities of the force. The Council had before it the latest report of the Secretary-General on UNAMI (S/2007/126). The Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, as well as by the representative of the United States on behalf of the multinational force.

On 22 March, the Council members, in a statement read by the President to the press, expressed their unwavering support for the efforts of the United Nations and its Secretary-General to promote an inclusive and effective political process in Iraq aimed at reaching national reconciliation and preserving its sovereignty and territorial integrity. They strongly condemned the terrorist attack on the Iraqi Prime Minister's office when the Secretary-General was there.

Non-proliferation

The Council in response to the report of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) showing that the Islamic Republic of Iran had not complied with resolution 1737 (2006) (S/2007/100), unanimously adopted resolution 1747 (2007) on 24 March. By resolution 1747 (2007) the Council reaffirmed the provisions of resolution 1737 (2006) and introduced additional measures to convince the Islamic Republic of Iran to seek a negotiated solution. In resolution 1747 (2007) the Council called for a further report from the IAEA Director General, within 60 days of the adoption of the resolution.

Afghanistan

On 20 March, the Council convened an open debate to consider the current political and related developments in Afghanistan. The meeting received briefings from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Tom Koenigs, as well as the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, Antonio Maria Costa.

The meeting was also attended by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy, given that Italy is a lead country on Afghanistan within the Security Council. Most of the speakers during the debate responded to the Secretary-General's report on Afghanistan (S/2007/152), which described the current state of affairs in Afghanistan in all its complexity. It outlined both the commendable progress made by the Government of Afghanistan in key areas such as reconstruction and development, and the immense challenges faced by that country, including increased insurgent activities, escalating cultivation of the opium poppy, slow progress in economic and social development and widespread corruption.

Subsequently, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1746 (2007) extending the mandate of UNAMA by one year, until 23 March 2008.

Europe

United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

The Council held a private debate on 19 March followed by closed consultations to consider the Secretary-General's quarterly report on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2007/134), presented by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Joachim Rücker. The representative of Serbia, the President of the Coordination Centre of the Republic of Serbia for Kosovo and Metohija, Sanda Rašković-Ivić, addressed the meeting. President Fatmir Sedjui, leader of the Kosovo Team of Unity, was also present.

Cyprus

On 27 March, the President of the Council read out a statement to the press on the situation in Cyprus, in which the Council members welcomed the recently reported confidence-building measures adopted by the parties to the conflict and urged both communities to work with the United Nations to implement the agreement of 8 July 2006.

Other issues

Women and peace and security

In honour of International Women's Day on 8 March, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/5) on 7 March, which addressed the role of women in the maintenance of international peace and security, and addressed their empowerment in a comprehensive manner.

The presidency was also invited to read out the presidential statement at the annual United Nations commemoration of International Women's Day on 8 March in the General Assembly.

Open debate on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security

On 28 March, the Council held an open debate on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union. The meeting was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa, N. C. Dlamini Zuma.

At the end of the debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/7) in which it recognized the important role of regional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations as well as its relevant resolutions and presidential statements.

Islamic Republic of Iran

On 29 March, the Council, in a statement read to the press by the President, expressed concern at the capture of 15 United Kingdom naval personnel and called for an early resolution of this problem, including their release.

Rwanda: adoption of resolution 1749 (2007)

On 28 March, the Council adopted resolution 1749 (2007) terminating the requirement in paragraph 11 of resolution 1011 (1995) that notification of all arms and related materiel transferred to the Government of Rwanda be brought to the attention of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 918 (1994).

Small arms

South Africa hosted informal consultations on a draft presidential statement on small arms on 19 and 28 March. The draft statement commanded broad support among Council members but full consensus continued to elude the experts.